

UNITED STATES CONSUL AT BREMEN.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

ENCLOSING

A communication addressed to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, in regard to increasing the compensation of the United States consul at Bremen.

JANUARY 13, 1859.—Referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, January 12, 1859.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a letter in reply to a communication, dated the 8th instant, addressed to this department by Hon. G. W. Hopkins, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, touching the expediency of increasing the compensation of the United States consul at Bremen, and request that you will give it the proper direction.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

LEWIS CASS.

Hon. JAMES L. ORR,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, January 12, 1859.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 8th instant, transmitting a letter addressed to Hon. H. M. Phillips by Mr. I. R. Diller, the United States consul at Bremen, in reference to the inadequacy of the consular compensation allowed to the consulate at that place.

In reply to your request for any information upon the subject which the department can furnish, I have the honor to state that the com-

pensation attached to the office is \$2,000 per annum, and the consul is not permitted to transact business. The consular fees, which in 1857 amounted to \$1,177 27, are, under existing provisions of law, paid into the United States treasury. A large number of American vessels are constantly arriving in Bremen requiring the immediate attention not only of the consul himself, but one or two clerks, and since the establishment of a line of steamers between New York and Bremen the consular duties have been largely increased by the number of American travellers arriving and departing. The Bremen office is also made to some extent a distributing office for parcels and letters transmitted from the department to the United States consular and diplomatic officers residing on the continent, the rate of postage being about fifty per cent. less upon mail matter sent directly to Bremen than if forwarded via Liverpool. Bremen is also the principal port from which emigrants take their departure to the United States, the number thus leaving amounting in the first ten and a half months of 1858 to 22,522, and for the first nine and a half months in 1857 to 44,951. It will be readily seen that the time of an intelligent consul must be much occupied in furnishing emigrants with information and in attending to their wants. A competent clerk cannot be obtained for less than \$600 per annum, which, in consequence of the repeal of the seventh section of the act of August 18, 1856, regulating the diplomatic and consular systems of the United States, must be paid from the compensation provided for the consul. The cost of living in Germany has also within a few years largely increased, as will be seen by reference to the accompanying extracts from despatches of the United States minister at Berlin and the consul general at Frankfort, relating to the consulate at Bremen, to which the attention of the committee is respectfully invited.

It will thus be perceived, as stated by the United States minister at Berlin, that the consul "cannot, with the most rigid economy, live upon his present salary," and it is respectfully suggested, for the consideration of the committee, whether it may not be expedient to provide by law for an increase of the consular compensation at Bremen, and to authorize the department to appoint a limited number of consular clerks, who shall receive for their services a certain portion of the fees, to be determined by the President, of the consulates to which they shall be respectively assigned.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

LEWIS CASS.

Hon. G. W. HOPKINS,

Chair'm Com. on Foreign Affairs, House of Reps.

No. 38.]

UNITED STATES LEGATION,

Berlin, September 18, 1858.

SIR : * * * * *

In confirmation of my previous views, our trade with Bremen and Hamburg is rapidly increasing, but not in American vessels. The

import of cotton into Bremen this year, it is believed, will reach two hundred thousand bales. Of ten hundred and fifty-four vessels which arrived and departed from Bremen during the past year four hundred and sixteen were connected with our trade; fifty-one steamers also arrived from and departed to the United States during the same time. This increase is also visible in our trade with Hamburg. The duties of the consuls at these two ports are greatly on the increase; and from my own knowledge of the character of the services which they are called upon to perform, and the intimate relations they sustain to the trade and emigration to our country, I consider the subject of the increase of their respective salaries worthy of the immediate attention of the government. Neither of the gentlemen, with the most rigid economy, can live upon his present salary. The labors at either of these ports are equal to those at Havre, as well as other places, where the salaries are much greater.

I have the honor to be, most respectfully, your obedient servant,
JOSEPH A. WRIGHT.

Hon. LEWIS CASS,
Secretary of State, Washington.

No. 166.] CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Frankfort, M., October 12, 1858.

SIR: * * * * * * *

The Bremen district extends to and includes Bremerhaven which is 50 miles off from Bremen, the residence of the Consul, who nevertheless has often to go there on important business at his own private expense. A similar observation would apply to Hamburg the business of which stretches down to Cuxhaven.

This kind of expanded business makes it necessary that consuls should have at their official residence good and competent assistants, and such, even in this over-populated country, cannot be had without comparative liberal salary.

I would here remark that *cheap* assistance is of no use at all. It is dangerous to the consul and disreputable to the consular office, and of course to the government to employ such.

The framers of the last consular bill, and Congress itself, appear not to have taken into consideration the altered condition of affairs in Europe within the last few years. It has been estimated by writers on political economy, that the extraordinary influx of gold since the year 1848 has had the effect to increase the expense of living throughout Germany generally full fifty per cent., but it is to be observed that this increase has not been throughout universal or uniform. Many country places had already a superabundant population, and generally speaking, the country districts were over provided with agricultural and other laborers. The sudden increase of money had the effect to create a spirit of speculation, such as extravagant banking, railroad projects, manufacturing and other enterprises; and all this had a tendency to call population from the

country to the great centres, and so it has happened that while some districts have remained, as to expense and inhabitants, stationary, and others have retrograded, the flow of population to the important points, such as Frankfort, Bremen, Hamburg, etc., (and these three in particular,) where alone such enterprises could be brought to life and properly managed, has augmented the expenses at these places at least one hundred per cent., and what is worse the expense of living appears to be still gradually and constantly increasing.

The salary of \$2,000 for Bremen and Hamburg might have been very well ten or twenty years ago, when exports amounted to but little, when there were no steam packets, when there were but few travellers from America, and when the Germans had not been awakened by railroads and telegraphs from the primitive and simple mode of life to which they had been accustomed for centuries. But now all this is changed. The trade of the United States with Germany instead of passing through England, as heretofore, is in a state of transition, and with proper nursing will be a *direct trade*, as it ought to have been long ago. There is a disposition in this country to avoid contributing commissions, charges, taxes, etc., for English agencies, when the whole business can be better carried on direct between Germany and America. This favorable disposition it seems to me should be encouraged, and to do so the United States should have competent consuls, and to secure the services of such adequate salaries should be allowed. The large number of steam vessels engaged in the trade between America and the ports of Hamburg and Bremen, the extraordinary increase of travel, the numerous railroad facilities, which throw business to these latter places, have given them an importance and consequence not possessed a dozen years ago, and have altogether wonderfully augmented the duties of the consuls, and rendered it necessary for them to employ, at a great expense, competent assistants. It seems to me that to throw this charge of the entire increase upon the consuls themselves is altogether wrong. I hold that the salary allowed a consul is for his *own* services, for what he can do himself, not for what it is impossible for him to do, and which consequently must be performed by another person. Should the government refuse to pay for services *beyond* what is possible for the consul to perform personally, it is a question whether he would not be perfectly justified in permitting the work which he could not do himself to remain undone. The salaries of the honorable secretaries of the United States government, and that of the home officers under them, of our military officers, naval officers, etc., are intended as a remuneration for their own personal services, and not for an indefinite amount of business to be performed by others at their charge; and it seems to me particularly oppressive to require consuls to employ assistants at their expense when the whole benefit of the same inures to the government, in the shape of fees. I have always considered that the consuls' salaries were (or should be) graded according to the importance of their several posts and the responsibility of the duties connected therewith. If I am correct in this, it will be found that the salaries for Liverpool and London are also

altogether too low. Probably the numerous services a consul has to perform, and the calls upon his time, may not be sufficiently understood in Washington.

Messrs. Diller and Miller have given a very clear account of their own grievances, and I will, in another communication, furnish details of the onerous operations of this office. It will probably surprise that great class of Americans who suppose that a consular office is a mere sinecure; that is to say, that the government furnish consuls salaries for *nothing* in return.

To return to the subject of expense of living, it may be said that in Germany there are a few, but rather limited districts where cheap rates continue to prevail, and those are a few of the isolated valleys or the mountain districts far from the facilities of communication, where, from the peculiarity of their situation, it is impossible for railroads to penetrate, or to export any little surplus of provisions that may be raised. In such places comparative cheapness may still continue, but they are not Germany, and should not be a criterion on which to estimate the salaries of consuls, who, as a matter of course, are always placed at the important points, and subjected to the highest rates of the country.

Railroads have had the effect to equalize prices all over the continent, and so it happens that German produce cannot remain only a trifle lower here than in Paris or London. And what is very singular is that stocks never accumulate here. So soon as the supply amounts to a trifle over the wants of consumption the surplus is immediately sent to other markets.

Persons who emigrated to America ten years ago can give no correct estimate of the expenses of living here at present. Those who return on visits to Germany are astonished at the wonderfully enhanced value of everything. And that is one reason why so many of them make miscalculations as to the amount of money requisite for the visit, and find themselves here without the means of return. Like everything else, rents have likewise advanced probably to full as great an extent within the last ten years as in the city of New York, and servants' wages, and everything connected with the keeping of a household, have gone up at such a rate that families which had a regular limited cash income for support, and which afforded them not only the comforts, but the luxuries of life, are now compelled to use the utmost economy to secure the bare necessities of life.

The consuls of Hamburg and Bremen cannot live on the salaries allowed them. This is a fact which it is but reasonable should be better known to them and to me, and of which we are, of course, more competent to speak understandingly and positively than the entire American Congress. We are *sure*, whilst on this matter the honorable members can only guess at it. Those of them, however, who have travelled on the continent within the last few years and patronized the respectable hotels will be very apt to give our statements their unqualified support. No matter how you may limit the consular authority, or with what restricted powers you may clothe them, or what consuls may say to the contrary, they are looked upon

as the representatives of their country. It is so in Hamburg; it is so in Bremen; and it is so here, unless in those very cases where I am entitled to, and claim diplomatic privileges. Not being a diplomatic character, not having the means or the time to give diplomatic entertainments, I have constantly, as an excuse for these short comings, brought to the notice of *real* representatives that I am merely a commercial agent. I have thought this course advisable because, if the question should come up for discussion in this diplomatic crowded community, (as it has already indirectly,) I would be placed as belonging to the *commercial*, as in fact my commission has placed me. But in Hamburg and Bremen, where commerce is king, consuls general and consuls are representatives, say what they may to the contrary. It strikes me that this additional dignity voluntarily accorded to the consular character should not be disregarded, but encouraged, as it gives influence to the consul. And it really *looks bad*, and it is a source of mortification to every American traveller, and a deeper mortification and wrong to the consuls themselves, that they have not the means to show some little attentions to American masters of vessels, to American travellers, and occasionally to the citizens of the place of their residence. It is furthermore discreditable to our country and injurious too, that the consuls are compelled to refuse invitations to social entertainments for the sole reason that they are unable to give any in return. This, for my part, I care very little about, but for Mr. Diller and Mr. Miller, who have families with them, it seems to me it would be agreeable and beneficial were they to mingle in society. I think consuls should be forced by their instructions to cultivate the acquaintance and seek the society of the respectable part of the community in which they may be located. It offers an advantage to the country; it would enable the consul to gain important and useful information for the State Department; and it would also give him an opportunity to correct many errors and unfavorable impressions in regard to his own country. Messrs. Diller and Miller, who hold important positions at the first commercial ports in Germany—ports having a great and constantly increasing trade with the United States—situated as the consular instructions have placed them, have it not in their power to enter the society of the place; they have it not in their power to profit by the respect which the citizens are disposed to accord to their commissions. The dignity of their offices is restricted and their usefulness to the country limited solely from the want of adequate compensation.

I beg to hand you, herewith, marked No. 1, copy of a letter from Mr. Diller, and, No. 2, copy of a letter from Mr. Miller, in which those gentlemen have entered fully into the position of their respective consulates. These letters are so full as to require no comments from me, still in referring to them I cannot but add my entire conviction that \$4,000 salary and \$1,000 for office expenses would be no more than a reasonable compensation for those important consulates.

I have the honor to be, with respect, sir, your obedient servant,

SAM. RICHER.

Hon. LEWIS CASS,
Secretary of State, Washington.

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Bremen, September 13, 1858.

SIR: I desire to bring to your notice some facts in regard to the prices of living, &c., at this consulate, with a view to request that you may take such steps as to you may seem best in order to bring the matter to the attention of the government and of Congress.

The salary of this consulate is fixed by law at \$2,000. To this there is an allowance made of ten per cent. for rent, \$200—making together \$2,200. To secure two or three small rooms in the third story for myself and family, and one for an office in the second story, I must pay \$400 per year. I might probably get lodgings cheaper some distance out of town, but I am required by the regulations to keep my office in a central part of the city, while it is very convenient to my countrymen that I should live in the house where my office is, so as to be always accessible when my services are required out of office hours.

To secure the services of a competent clerk, familiar with the language of the country and with consular business, in accordance also with instructions, I must pay him \$600 per annum. Such an assistant is actually and positively necessary. The port of entry at Bremerhaven is fifty miles from this city, and my presence is frequently demanded there for several days together; there is also no provision made for expenses incurred in visiting the port. This amount, at least \$40 a year, I always paid out of my own pocket. There is no provision made for furnishing an office beyond a plain desk, and persons having business to do with this consulate would have to remain standing or take a seat on the floor, had I not purchased, out of my funds, a few chairs.

In this high northern latitude fires are positively necessary seven months in the year, yet the fuel used in my office comes out of my salary; lights also, which are necessary in winter on account of the shortness of the days, must be procured at my expense. These two latter items cost last winter thirty-one dollars.

When I first came here I tried boarding at a hotel, (there are no private boarding houses.) I used two rooms, dined at the *table d'hôte*, and was obliged to pay, including fire, lights, and service, \$100 per month. Thinking I could live more economically, I tried house keeping, but in the plainest style, and with but one servant, giving no parties of any kind, and refraining, for this reason, from attending any, only having a carriage for an hour or two occasionally when absolutely necessary; but I find I can live quite as cheaply at hotel, probably a little cheaper. I prefer, however, keeping house, if I were able, because it looks more respectable, particularly if the consul has a family.

Some articles of clothing are reasonable enough here, but, taken on an average, there is in that respect very little difference between this place and New York.

This being a large shipping port, I am frequently called upon to relieve destitute American persons who, having come to this country

on a visit to their friends and spent all their money, apply to me, with a passport under the broad seal of the Department of State, for assistance to reach their adopted country. This class of persons are a source of great trouble and expense to the consul. Being citizens of the United States the authorities here are not disposed to help them, and one cannot see the poor creatures starving without coming to their relief. There ought to be some law adopted by which naturalized citizens coming to this country with a view of returning to America should be compelled to give security before leaving there that they would not become a charge upon the United States officials abroad. There is a law to that effect upon leaving this country, and why not a similar one when they return?

Again: there are now running between this port and New York two lines of steamers, giving us three arrivals per month. These invariably bring a number of Americans, who call upon the consul and seem to expect some attention from him. It not unfrequently happens that travellers are provided with letters from the President or heads of department, by which officials abroad are called upon to extend courtesy to the bearers. These matters, small individually, are of considerable importance in the aggregate. With anything like a decent salary, such little civilities would never be mentioned, for it is always a pleasure to be of service to our countrymen and show them attention.

I assure you, my dear consul general, that, living as I have in the plainest manner and with the greatest economy in all things, the last year I exceeded my salary nearly fifteen hundred dollars. Now, I hold that a consul at a point of as much importance as this is ought to have a salary sufficient to allow him to live respectably and maintain a decent appearance in society. I do not mean sufficient to enter into any extravagances—to keep a carriage or give large dinner parties or any such nonsense—but enough and only enough to live respectably. A comfortable house, with an office, could be rented for from six to eight hundred dollars. Twenty-five hundred dollars is as little as it could be kept up for, not counting in the furniture, which the consul would, of course, have to purchase. Clothing, fuel, lights, taxes, hire of servants, and contingencies, a thousand, making four thousand dollars; and another thousand for clerk hire, fuel, lights, and furniture for office, travelling expenses to the port, relief of worthy destitute Americans, &c.; altogether five thousand dollars. On my honor, I do not believe a single cent could be saved out of such a salary.

Now, let us look a moment at the importance of this port to American interests. The total number of arrivals and departures from this port last year was ten hundred and fifty sea-going vessels. Of this number, four hundred and sixteen ships and fifty-one steamers arrived and departed from and to the United States. The exports and imports to and from the United States amounted to 33,716,634 thalers, or about \$26,000,000. The emigration alone was over forty-eight thousand souls during last year from this port, the great ma-

jority of whom were well provided with means to locate in the south or west.

To say nothing of the rapidly increasing trade of this place, the amount of emigration alone makes it an important point to the interests of the United States; particularly, since England is moving heaven and earth to divert the people to Australia and the Cape, by large offers of money, free passage, and of lands. It is in the power of the consul to do much towards keeping emigration in the proper channel. Through his influence information on this subject may be published, and slanders against our country or her institutions refuted. By his correspondence, also, emigrant agents, to whom those wishing to emigrate look for advice, may be kept posted as to the inducements which our country offers. This is an important consideration in favor of placing this consulate on a better footing, and I beg you will dwell upon it in making your report to the government.

I have said all that I deem necessary to post you with regard to my position, its necessities and importance; and, begging pardon for inflicting on you so long a despatch, I remain, with sentiments of high regard, your very obedient servant,

ISAAC R. DILLER,
United States Consul, Bremen.

SAMUEL RICHER, Esq.,
United States Consul General, Frankfort-on-the-Mayne.

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Hamburg, September 10, 1858.

DEAR SIR: Your letter informs me that my opinion as to the amount of salary upon which a consul may live respectably at this post is desired. Under the new law, which forbids the consul from engaging in any business, and transfers the fees for all official services to the government, although several persons have been appointed, no one has been able to remain here. Except when filled by a vice-consul, who was a merchant in business, no consulate can be said to have been permanently maintained here under the new law. The only appointee who has had the hardihood to make the attempt, was a person of good habits and of great economy, a married man, with one child. As the history of his trials and escape show what can be done in Hamburg, on the present salary, I shall give you the account as the facts are related to me by the most friendly and reliable authority.

As there is no provision made for any suitable furniture, fuel or lights for an office, the consul was forced to hold his consular office in his hotel rooms, which, during the eighteen months that his struggle lasted, were shifted some four times, in the vain endeavor to bring his expenses within his income. Not being able to employ a clerk, he was compelled to have his baby's nurse and his wife's chambermaid act as his interpreter, while he personally carried the numerous packages consigned to his care by the government, to the different package, post, and express offices. He was thus dodging about for a

year and a half, to the great annoyance of all the merchants and captains of vessels, who with difficulty could keep track of the consulate, at which the law compels them personally to appear and swear to their invoices, landing certificates, and other papers. After a gallant struggle against difficulties which could not be overcome, he was glad to avail himself of an escape from his dilemma by accepting a free passage home, in consideration of services to be rendered after his arrival in the United States.

Hamburg is a city of nearly 200,000 inhabitants, with a foreign commerce surpassing that of any city on the continent, with several lines of sailing vessels and a semi-monthly line of steamers to New York. No American citizen will fail to blush for his country when informed that the consul of his nation was compelled by the insufficiency of his salary to resort to such shifts, which have not failed to excite the derision of the Hamburg community. As there is no such thing known here as private boarding houses, hotels or house-keeping are the only available accommodations; the latter involves an outfit of furniture, and to those unaccustomed to German servants and customs, is extremely troublesome and expensive. The hotels which pretend to neatness and comfort are as expensive as those in our own large cities. Four thousand dollars is as little as any man of family can live respectably upon in Hamburg; and unless a consul thus lives he must fail to exercise that influence with the community and the authorities which he is frequently called upon to exert for the benefit of his countrymen. A provision of one thousand dollars a year should likewise be provided for clerk hire and office expenses, as an experienced and competent clerk should be attached to each important seaport consulate.

The result of the experiment of a salary of two thousand dollars at Hamburg has thus far resulted in a total failure to obtain any permanent incumbent for the office, and without drawing largely on my own private resources, it would be utterly impossible for me to remain even for the winter.

No one can and no one will long retain the position, who is fit to discharge the duties, unless the government make more liberal provisions for the maintenance of this consulate.

Very respectfully yours,

JOHN B. MILLER,
U. S. Consul.

Hon. SAMUEL RICHER,
Consul General.

No. 55.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Bremen, December 8, 1858.

SIR: * * * * *

I herewith enclose a table (No. 1) showing the rates of postage on letters of $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce from London to different parts of Europe, and from Bremen to the same places, based upon information received from the

postmaster here. It will be perceived that the difference in favor of Bremen is fully fifty per cent., and a consequent saving of that amount to the department.

Next with regard to mails. We have two daily mails by railroad from this city, connecting with the leading routes to all parts of the continent, so that after reaching here the advantages are, in point of speed, the same as if sent from London.

Except during the winter months, a weekly despatch-bag could be sent to me by the Bremen and Hamburg steamers, each making alternate semi-monthly trips, and in the winter each making alternate monthly trips.

Arrangements can be made with the post office department here to bring to Bremen my despatch-bag from Hamburg, on the arrival of their steamers, in the regular mail-wagon under charge of the mail-guard, for a small compensation. * * * * *

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

ISAAC R. DILLER,
United States Consul, Bremen.

Hon. LEWIS CASS,
Secretary of State, Washington.

Table showing the difference in postages from Bremen and London to the following places on letters up to one-half ounce.

Place.	From Bremen.	From London.	Difference in favor of Bremen.
	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.
German States—			
To Baden	7	16	9
To Bavaria			
To the Hesses			
To Frankfort			
To Austria			
To Prussia			
To Saxony			
To Brunswick			
To Wurtemberg			
To Lubec			
To Nassau			
To Hanover	3	16	13
To Denmark	9	21	12
To Holland	9	16	7
To Greece	19	29	10
To Papal States	13	22	9
To Hamburg	5	16	11
To Modena, Parma, &c.	10	18	8
To Norway	19	32	13
To Russia	14	23	9
To Sardinia	17	36	19
To Alexandria			
To Genoa			
To Nizza			
To Zurin			
To Sweden	17	26	9
To Switzerland	10	23	13

The difference of postage on private matter is also in favor of Bremen, though not to so great an extent as upon letters.